

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 OMB-01 NIC-01

DRC-01 /154 W

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R 211115Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4367

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USNT BAGHDAD

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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DEPT ALSO PASS CAIRO

EO 11652: N/A DECON 9/22/74

TAGS: PINS, XF

SUBJECT: INTER-FEDAYEEN CONTROVERSY RE DETENTE WITH JORDAN

REF: BEIRUT 1167

BEGIN SUMMARY:LATEST PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
HERE IN ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE FEDAYEEN SQUABBLES RE ARAB DETENTE WITH
JORDAN APPEARS TO HAVE MADE LITTLE PROGRESS. PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGNS
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BY CONTENDING COMMANDO FACTIONS CONTINUE UNABATED, ACCOMPANIED

BY SIGNS OF MOUNTING CONFUSION AND BITTERNESS IN FEDAYEEN RANKS.
END SUMMARY.

1. PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD WHAT REPORTEDLY WAS HEATED TEN-HOUR MEETING IN BEIRUT SEPT 20 TO ATTEMPT WORK OUT UNIFIED FEDAYEEN POSITION RE SYRIA-EGYPT RAPPROCHEMENT WITH JORDAN. MEETING ATTENDED BY'ARAFAT, SA'IQA'S ZOHAYR MUHSIN, PLA COMMANDER BUDAYRI, AND REPS OF OTHER PALESTINIAN FACTIONS PLUS "INDEPENDENTS". AS FAR AS AN CAN DETERMINE,PLO/EC FAILED ARRIVE AT ANY AGREEMENT ON MAIN ISSUE, ALTHOUGH ALL PARTICIPANTS ALLEGEDLY ENDORSED NOTION THAT ANY REVITALIZED EASTERN ARAB COMMAND SHOULD BE "FIGHTING COMMAND", NOT JUST PAPER FACADE; THAT ENTIRE PLA SHOULD BE REGARDED SOLELY AS PLO INSTRUMENT; THAT FEDAYEEN INFORMATION ORGANS SHOULD AVOID EXACERBATION OF COMMANDO DIFFERENCES; AND THAT SUCH DIFFERENCES SHOULD BE RESOLVED WITHIN PLO FRAMEWORK. WE UNDERSTAND EACH OF THESE "DECISIONS" WAS HOTLY DEBATED AND ONLY GRUDGINGLY ACCEPTED BY THOSE ATTENDING. FOLLOWING MEETING, PLO SPOKESMAN COMMENTED ONLY THAT PLO/EC DISCUSSION HAD BEEN "VERY FRANK" AND THAT ALL FACTIONS "WERE CLOSE TO AGREEMENT". (WE BELIEVE FORMER, BUT DISCOUNT LATTER.)

2. IN MEANTIME, WAR OF WORDS BETWEEN SA'IQA AND FATAH/PLO CONTINUES, WITH SA'IQA'S DAMASCUS WEEKLY, AT TALAI', REPLYING SEPT 20 TO FEDAYEEN CRITICISM OF SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN DETENTE WITH JORDAN (FBIS M201555). AFTER BITTERLY CASTIGATING PLO (Wafa) NEWS AGENCY FOR "LIES AND CHILDISH CLAMOR" AIMED AT DISTORTING FACTS RE SARG'S "HONORABLE" BEHAVIOR IN SEPT 13 AIR CLASH WITH IAF, TALAI' LIKENED RAPPROCHEMENT WITH JORDAN TO MAO TSE TUNG'S WARTIME ALLIANCE WITH NATIONALIST CHINESE. PAPER WENT ON TO DEFEND SYRIAN POLICY ON GROUNDS IT HAD PRODUCED "DRAMATIC CHANGE" IN KING HUSSEIN'S HITHERTO "OBSTRUCTIONIST" ATTITUDE, SINCE-- FRIGHTENED BY BOURGUIBA'S PROPOSAL FOR PALESTINE STATE "BACKED BY US AND ISRAEL"--HE ALLEGEDLY IS NOW BEING FORCED THROW IN HIS LOT WITH "CONFRONTATION STATES" AND ASSUME HIS RESPONSIBILITIES IN "LIBERATION BATTLE". "STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL IMPORTANCE" OF THIS CHANGE, CLAIMED TALAI', MAKES IT UNNECESSARY TO ADVOCATE OVERTHROW OF HASHEMITE REGIME (WHICH IN ANY CASE IS "SUBJECTIVELY AND OBJECTIVELY IMPOSSIBLE"), AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING: "ALTHOUGH WE PERFECTLY AWARE THAT JORDANIAN REGIME IS AN ENEMY TO BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOUGHT AT SOME LATER STAGE, . . . MAIN OBSTACLE TO REACTIVATION OF EASTERN FRONT HAS NOW BEEN REMOVED, AND FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT, NOTABLY FATAH WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY ENTHUSIASTICALLY ADVOCATED RETURN TO JORDAN, SHOULD SHOW MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE."

3. AT SAME TIME, SIGNS OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR FATAH/PLO LEADERSHIP'S CONTINUED REFUSAL TO ACQUIESCE IN DETENTE WITH JORDAN APPEARED IN COMMUNIQUE CIRCULATED HERE BY PDFLP SEPT 20. IN

VIOLENT ATTACK ON GOJ AND "PALESTINIAN FORCES LINKED WITH
REACTIONARY CIRCLES", PDFLP TERMED KING HUSSEIN'S AMNESTY
AS "MANEUVER AIMED AT SOWING DISSENSION BETWEEN FEDAYEEN ON
ONE HAND AND SYRIA-EGYPT ON OTHER". IN WHAT IS PERHAPS MOST
CANDID COMMENT WE HAVE SEEN TO DATE ON CURRENT TURMOIL WITHIN
FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT, PDFLP ALLEGED THAT GOJ'S SUCCESS IN
PERSUADING SYRIA TO IMPOSE NEW RESTRICTONS ON FEDAYEEN
ACTIVITY IN SYRIA "HAS CREATED ATMOSPHERE OF CONFUSION IN OUR
RANKS AS WELL AS CRISIS WITH SYRIA AND EGYPT".

4. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM EMBASSY AMMAN'S REPORTING ON
THIS SUBJECT, WE THINK IT OUIE UNLIKELY THAT KING HUSSEIN
COMMITTED HIMSELF TO ANYTHING REMOTELY RESEMBLING REACTIVATION
OF "FIGHTING"EASTERN FRON IN JORDAN OR THAT HE SERIOUSLY INTENDS
PERMIT EVEN TOKEN RETURN OF FEDAYEEN UNITS (INCLUDING PLA)
TO JORDAN. THIS BEING THE CASE, WOULD APPEAR THEC FEDAYEEN
TURMOIL DESCRIBED ABOVE IS TAKING PLACE (AS IT OFTEN TENDS TO DO)
IN ALMOST TOTAL VACUUM AND DIVORCED FROM ALL REALITY. IF HUSSEIN
INTENDED HIS PARTICIPATION IN CAIRO SUMMIT TO THROW FEDAYEEN FOR
A LOOP AND SET THEM AT EVEN GREATER ODDS AMONG THEMSELVES (AND
WITH OTHER ARAB GOVTS.), HE CERTAINLY HAS SUCCEDED ADMIRABLY.
HOUGHTON

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO

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